



Public Health
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CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT

JOSEPH A. CURTATONE
MAYOR

COMMISSION FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

12 January 2021

Regular Monthly Meeting

Present: Nancy Salamoun, Staff Liaison, Mgr. of Equity Diversity and Inclusion
Bonnie Denis, Chair
Colin Killick, Commissioner
Lian Guertin, Commissioner
Katie Milton, Commissioner
Brian Postlewaite, Secretary, Assist. Director of Engineering

Absent: None

Guests: Joan Liu, Resident
Viola Augustin, OSPCD-Mobility
Haleemah Qureshi, IAM-Engineering

Note: Due to COVID-19 Shutdown, all attendees were remote via Zoom Meeting.

General Business

- Meeting commenced on 12 January at 6:30pm.
- The City Council approved Katie and Lian's nomination to the Commission.

Guest Presentation

- Viola Augustin & Haleemah Qureshi presented Accessible Parking goals that will be used on the Spring Hill Sewer Separation Project.
 - The plan is to provide at least one accessible parking space in commercial areas with at least three establishments. They would be located as follows:
 - With a designated accessible curb cut, or adjacent to a crosswalk with one, or adjacent to a driveway curb cut that meets accessibility requirements;
 - Within 200' of each establishment, providing more accessible parking spaces if necessary to meet this goal;
 - Close to intersection and crosswalks; and
 - On the far side of the intersection
 - The Commission questioned about whether any proposed protected bike lanes would obstruct parking access to the sidewalk.
 - No, the proposed protected bike lanes will not be protected by parking, thus there will be no such obstruction on this project.
 - Most business areas have 2 hour parking restrictions, but not for accessible parking spaces. Should time limits be considered for accessible parking spaces? Commission requested no time limits for three reasons:
 - People with disabilities typically take more time than others, and selecting an appropriate time would be difficult and unfair to those with greater disabilities.
 - The activation energy for people with disabilities is very high, and having to schedule errands around time limits would further discourage people with disabilities from engaging with the community.
 - People with disabilities are a small enough population that they don't usually have difficulty finding a vacant accessible parking space where they exist.
 - The Commission questioned whether the project will have signals with flashing lights, especially flashing stop signs and RRFBs. These are particularly difficult, and sometimes dangerous, for some people with disabilities (e.g. autistic). Please avoid if possible.
 - Though not currently proposed in the Spring Hill Sewer Separation project, would it be acceptable to combine Accessible Parking,

Loading Zones and Pick-Up/Drop-Off Zones in the same curb space in residential areas?

- Commission felt that this could reasonably work, so long as disabled parkers were not limited in their parking time.
- The legality of these multi-use spaces would need to be determined.

Chair's Report

- Bonnie, Colin and Joan are working with Ken Carlson and Mark Chase on the Somerville Alliance for Safe Streets (SASS) Summit.

Director's Report

- Working to revise City job postings to remove discriminatory language (e.g. lifting requirement) that is not typically required by the job.

Old Business

- Obtain update on MAAB variance for temporary ramps.
 - Consider expediting variance by enforcement against a restaurant.
 - Ramp variance may be necessary for post-COVID if street restaurants remain popular.

New Business

- Future agenda items:
 - Bylaw revision to extend commissioner terms to three years.
 - Commission membership advertisement.
 - Nancy will send out a copy of Commission Bylaws to Commissioner.

Motion to Adjourn Meeting at 8:10pm; approved unanimously.